

## **V. IMPLEMENTATION**

The following actions will be implemented as funding becomes available and the following list will be used to coordinate recruitment of funds and support for projects.

Success of this plan will depend on efforts to monitor and evaluate the NRCA and to tailor the management of the site to meet changing conditions. Success also depends on maintaining good working relationships with adjacent land managers, user groups, volunteers, land owners and associated agencies.

### **Summary of Management Actions**

#### *Sensitive Areas*

- Continue the herpetological inventory started by the DNR Natural Heritage Program herpetologist in June 2000. The inventory should focus on rare species, declining species, and species that have special management needs such as Larch Mountain salamander, cascade torrent salamander, Cope's giant salamander, and tailed frog.. Priority habitats are balds, rocky areas, headwater streams, seeps and lentic habitats.
- Determine the distribution and relative abundance of other rare and declining species such as the northern spotted owl, peregrine falcon, bald eagle, Howell's daisy, and Douglas' silene.
- Conduct an inventory for some of the site's insects and other invertebrates. Currently, very little is known about Table Mountain's insects. It would not be feasible or cost effective to attempt to inventory all of the insect species within the Table Mountain NRCA boundary. However, some information about the area's invertebrate community could be gained by encouraging Washington groups such as the Scarabs, Washington Butterfly Association, Northwest Lepidopterist Association, North American Butterfly Association, and the Xerces Society to conduct inventories for us. Rare landscape features such as balds, oak communities, and rocky areas should be priority habitats for insect inventories.
- Conduct an inventory of the area's bats. Bats undoubtedly use the NRCA but the relative importance of this area to bats is not known. The inventory should focus on suitable habitat in the Greenleaf Basin, riparian habitats, and in the Bonneville landslide area. The large cave in the Yakima basalt within the southeast outlier portion of the NRCA should be inventoried. This cave is too dangerous to enter but bat exit surveys could be conducted.
- Update species lists (Appendices B, C, D, E and F) as new species are found or as a

species status changes.

***Cultural and Historical Resources***

- The cultural features located on DNR lands should undergo a total resource inventory and survey. The survey should include traditional cultural properties and current use areas, as well as an historic and archaeological survey. The survey should include the sites currently recorded with the Office of Historic and Archaeological Preservation, as well as the NRCA lands north and east of the known sites. DNR will invite local tribes to be involved in survey, mapping and management decisions and recommendations.

***Public Access Management***

***Education and Research***

- Continue ongoing development of the site steward program for the Table Mountain NRCA. Provide site-related training and education to stewards so they can share site and conservation information with site users. Recruit volunteers to help inform all types of users and the community about NRCA goals, fragile areas, use provisions, ecological resources, and history.
- Install informational signs at access points, and other key locations to explain the purpose of the site, educate users about the resources on the site, and to direct use. Materials should be appropriate to the rustic nature of the site.
- Develop environmental interpretation materials for the balds area to educate users about balds, their fragile nature, and the risk of impact from excessive use.
- Develop environmental interpretive materials for the NRCAs connection to the Pacific Crest Trail, which will inform users about the NRCA features near the trail.
- Provide educational signs or other interpretive materials where use is restricted or limited due to fragility, impacts or other reasons. Include explanation of the closure's purpose and its intended outcome.
- Where environmental restoration is proposed or under way, provide interpretive materials to educate and inform the public about the activities, and the proposed outcome of the work.
- Actively pursue opportunities to involve educational institutions in research at Table Mountain NRCA. Research proposals will be reviewed by the Natural Areas Program ecologist and region program staff to ensure consistency with the program goals.

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- Work with interested user groups, members of the public and the local community to develop an understanding and appreciation for the conservation goals of the NRCA.
- Work with user groups, schools and the local community to identify opportunities for their involvement in stewardship and restoration activities where possible, including providing training, tools and other necessary materials so they can actively participate in maintaining, restoring and enhancing public use areas.

### ***Public Access***

- All trails should be routed away from dangerous areas. Hiker safety is of major concern when constructing new trails or rerouting trails.
- Develop a trail maintenance agreement with user groups.
- The Table Mountain NRCA is to be used primarily for foot travel, because of the site's sensitivity. Travel is limited to designated trails and a few roads. Inform users by placing signs at site access points, indicating the sensitivity of the area and that all other types of travel and human use, pets, pack animals, and overnight camping are excluded from this site.
- Avoid establishing new trails, or promoting increased use, on or near balds and other sensitive areas, except to reduce existing impact. Implementation will include involvement of the user community and the public.
- Develop and implement a carefully designed formal user survey to determine the level and type of public use. Survey results combined with monitoring results will help assure conservation of the area while providing opportunities for low-impact public use. At a minimum, the user survey should assess:
  - Baseline use (type, level, frequency)
  - Future use trends
  - Relationship between current and future levels of use, and the site's conservation issues
  - User familiarity with and understanding of the site
  - Environmental education knowledge and needs
- Guide public use away from sensitive or degraded areas. Use signs and other interpretive materials to guide and educate users about the protection of sensitive areas, and to highlight restoration activities.
- Avoid leading NRCA visitors on trails or roads to locations that would encourage

trespass on private lands.

- Work with user groups to reduce impacts and conflicts arising from group use, and/or conflicting types of uses.
- Temporarily restrict public access in areas during stewardship activities and extreme conditions, if necessary. Other seasonal closures of sites or trails may be needed to protect sensitive plants, wildlife, highly erosive soils, and restoration efforts, or due to high user impact.

***Roads and Easements***

- Implement the Table Mountain Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan. Most existing roads, without easements, will be abandoned and generally new roads will not be constructed since motorized use is not considered a low-impact activity and conflicts with the NRCA's conservation purpose. Work with right-of-way easement holders to reduce impacts to the NRCA from roads and easements.
- Existing deeded easements, which provide legal access across the NRCA to other lands, will continue to provide the right(s)-of-way set forth within the recorded legal document(s). DNR staff will work with easement beneficiaries to encourage development of a limited access approach, including gates where feasible, to protect the site's resources from inappropriate uses. Specifically, this will include working with other rights-of-way holders towards the following desired outcomes to reduce impact to the NRCA.

***Fire Management***

- Conduct a review of the existing fire management plan for Table Mountain and revise as necessary to incorporate the fire management guidelines within this management plan, and to remove those not consistent with the plan's provisions.

***Weed Management***

- Periodically survey for and map locations of weeds throughout the NRCA but especially in sensitive areas and areas with a high potential for weed invasion.
- Develop and implement a weed control plan using integrated pest management practices.

***Monitoring***

- Develop a monitoring protocol to evaluate trends and effects of introduced plant species within the red fescue montane grassland community. The monitoring regime would likely be infrequent, approximately once every five years.

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- Establish a monitoring protocol to examine tree and shrub encroachment within the balds, particularly in the red fescue montane grassland community. Trees and shrubs may encroach on the bald community over time, which may require some control of trees through prescribed fire, tree removal or tree girdling. The monitoring regime would likely be infrequent, approximately once every five to 10 years.
- Establish a monitoring protocol to examine changes in the Howell's daisy population over time.
- Establish a monitoring protocol to examine the impacts of human use on the balds. A quantitative approach should be utilized that describes existing conditions and then monitors potential impacts over time. The desired condition is a high-quality native community where vegetation loss and damage is confined to established trails and there are no increases in introduced species associated with trail use. Data collected during monitoring would include information on the current condition and species composition of the balds, information on the number and location of all trails. Any significant departure from current conditions over time would be considered unacceptable.

### ***Research***

- Promote research that will provide information about the threats to the Howell's daisy population and the red fescue montane grassland communities.
- Promote research that will provide basic natural history information about Howell's daisy and the red fescue montane grassland community.
- Actively pursue opportunities to involve educational institutions in research at Table Mountain NRCA. Research proposals will be reviewed by the Natural Areas Program ecologist and natural areas region manager to ensure consistency with program goals. Natural Heritage Program review and approval is necessary for all Natural Heritage Program data-related research.

### ***Restoration***

- Sections of trails that traverse sensitive areas will be abandoned. Check dams will be used in highly eroded areas to divert or slow the flow of water down abandoned trails. Where necessary, hydrologic connectivity will be restored. Abandoned trails will either be allowed to naturally re-vegetate or will be restored using site-collected seed.
- Roads deemed unnecessary for management purposes will be abandoned. Drainage structures will be removed and the natural streambed will be restored to as close to its original location, depth and width as possible. Sections of road that were constructed using sidecast fill or that have unstable fill material will be recontoured by pulling sidecast materials upslope against the cutslope and recontoured to approximate the original slope.

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Unvegetated areas on abandoned roads and culvert removal sites either be allowed to naturally re-vegetate or will be restored using site-collected seed.